The Earlham Word

Pursuing Truth Wherever It May Lead. Since 1986. Earlham College

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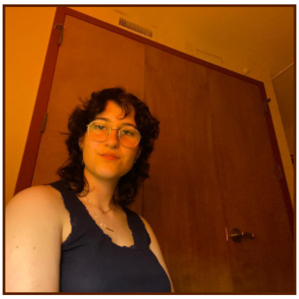

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Mission Statement

The Word exists to produce quality publications that enrich Earlham's community. Our team is dedicated to upholding the standards of journalistic integrity while allowing writers and editors the creative freedom to write stories they want to express. We thrive on collaboration and communication and always prioritize our readers.

Editors Note

Dear readers —

Welcome back, everyone! The Earlham Word is back after a belated start, and we are so ready to get Earlham happenings out to you again. Thank you for reading!

With this issue, David and I are introducing ourselves as your new managing editors, and with that, we welcome four new copy editors, two new layout editors, and one new website editor. On that note, our website has been greatly changed over the summer. If you want to check us out online, visit us at earlhamword.com. Our previous issues are uploaded here, and we will continue to upload them here until we get to printing again.

Throughout this issue, we cover a summary from our past Quaker Meetings for Worship, we get to know our visiting poet and Earlham Alum, Leah Naomi Green, and dive into a lot of other things across campus and around Earlham: a new secret spot, three new spotlights, and a look into Earlham's new student organization: The Hidden Opponent!

We've also got two opinion pieces in here, courtesy of Yara Matar and Gus Fuller. Along with those, we finish off this issue with some classic entertainment sections: two reviews, a crossword, and another Cheers and Sneers. Since Talia graduated, we'd like to thank Max Fox for taking up the mantle of compiler for Cheers and Sneers.

With a new year comes new formatting for the Word. This issue comes as a stepping stone between our old and our new printed formats, which will hopefully be unveiled across campus later this semester! For now, we're entirely online, which means the Word is really stepping into the future.

We hope you enjoy paging through this first issue of the semester! See you next issue!

Sincerely,
Isabelle Fisher and David Mathew
(your new Managing Editors)

Hoosiers Helping Habitat

"Richmond community members' efforts to remove invasive species from old-growth forest"

By Cassidy Calcaterra

Jenilee Braun and Hayes Arboretum staff pictured planting a tree.

Indiana's agricultural landscape, which dedicates 64% of its land to farming, is in a constant struggle for healthy, fertile soil (Nature Conservancy). While the state aspires to maintain productive land, exploitative farming practices and invasive species have significantly contributed to soil degradation. During the early 19th century, Indiana was predominantly covered by deciduous hardwood forests common to the eastern United States. However, as the state transformed with agricultural expansion and urban development, these natural habitats were largely cleared, giving way to invasive species that outcompete native plants, disrupting pollinator populations, and providing inadequate food resources for wildlife, further compromising the ecosystem (indiananativeplants.org). Nonnative species can even alter soil chemistry, exacerbating the challenges faced by local agriculture.

In response to the pressing issue of invasive species, community-led conservation efforts are emerging across Indiana to restore native biodiversity and protect natural resources. One significant initiative is Weed Wrangle Day, which mobilizes volunteers statewide to manage invasive plants that threaten local ecosystems, including public parks and green spaces.

Last Saturday (October 12), community members in Richmond took part in this broader movement by participating in a conservation event organized by Hayes Arboretum and the State of Indiana Cooperative Invasives Management. During Weed Wrangle events, volunteers receive hands-on training to identify and remove harmful invasive species, helping to safeguard native plant communities. In Richmond, participants worked together to pull periwinkle from the woods at Hayes Arboretum to prevent its spread into the adjacent old-growth forest. This collaborative effort not only fosters environmental stewardship but also educates participants on the significance of preserving Indiana's native habitats.

Entrance of Hayes Arboretum's forest, similar to the site the volunteers worked at.

For more information on Weed Wrangle events in Indiana, go to the website https://www.sicim.info/weed-wrangle-indiana. For more local events or volunteer opportunities, go to the Hayes Arboretum website, https://www.hayesarboretum.org

Reading into Leah Naomi Green: Earlham Alum and Poet

"Earlham welcomes a recognized poet and alum for Homecoming weekend"

By Isabelle Fisher

Courtesy of Leah Naomi Green's website

During the 2024 Homecoming weekend, Earlham will welcome Leah Naomi Green, an award-winning poet and Earlham Alum, to visit English and Environmental Sustainability classes and give a poetry reading to the open community on Friday, October 18th. Green's first poetry book, The More Extravagant Feast, was published in 2020 and gave rise to her name as a poet, winning her The Walt Whitman Award of the Academy of Poets, among other recognized awards.

Green graduated Earlham in 2005 with a degree in Environmental Studies, which was not an option to study at Earlham at the time. She designed her own major with the help of Scott Hess, who had just recently arrived at Earlham in her time there. In designing this major, Green became a student representative on the committee that worked to create what is now Earlham's Environmental Sustainability major. She now lives in Virginia with her partner and two daughters in an ecological community, where she grows her own food to live off.

Her first poetry book was largely inspired by her pregnancy and the birth of her first daughter, but her poetic ideas are ever-changing and elusive, as are the concepts of any good poem. "What makes a poem and therefore a reader come alive is when the poet is writing about something that they themselves don't understand," Green said. The poetry within her first book forced her to face these unanswerable questions through the written word: "Where do we begin? At what point does my daughter's body become separate from my body?" This first book focused on the idea of interbeing through the framework of birth.

Green is currently working on a new poetry book, which will focus on the same idea of interbeing through the framework of death: "[The framework of death] feels relevant personally and globally as we're mourning. I'm super interested in this question in what it looks like to mourn not in a way that isolates us but in a way that reconnects us."

Green emphasizes her greatest accomplishments come not as a poet but as a person. "It's a funny thing to get a little bit famous," she laughed, "If you went to Earlham College, you eventually realize that [fame] does not make you happy. There are countless awards, and next year, someone else will get it." She acknowledges that receiving this external recognition for her work legitimized it for her, but the relationships and community she has been able to build are of far greater value in her life.

She encourages Earlham students to write with these ideas in mind: "Write what's real to you. Read a lot, but don't write what you're reading. Write what is true for you," she says, "Push past the poem that already knows its own ending. Push yourself into what you don't know and let the writing carry you there."

Leah Naomi Green will give a reading of her poetry on Friday, October 18th, at 2:30 in LBC 105. If you are interested in hearing her speak or asking her further questions about her experience and career, be sure to stop by to listen to her work.

With Open Arms

"A Summary of a Message from College Meeting for Worship"

By Sabrina Kirchner

Photo Credit: Sabrina Kirchner

My College Meeting for Worship message focused on which attributes are most important to community building and how I think community building is the first step towards peace. My message was preceded by selections from the sacred writings of the Bahá'í Faith and was partly based in Bahá'í beliefs, although not entirely. I also spoke extensively about my experience with City Year New Hampshire, where I worked for a year as a tutor in a 5th grade classroom.

In the Bahá'í Faith, we believe in the inherent equality of all humanity, and that world peace is inevitable. But true peace is a long way off, and we cannot have peace throughout the world until we have established peace on a smaller scale. The work starts at the lowest level, with interactions between individuals and within communities.

To me, a community is a network of safety, and trust is the biggest key to that network. A community must be able to trust each other to be there to catch someone when they fall. Each member must be able to trust that feedback is given in good faith with the intention to help each other grow.

In order to have that trust within a community, kind words must be backed up by kind actions. Prayer can help us find solutions to problems, but prayer itself is not the solution. We cannot just say that we are praying for someone; we have to actually show up to help when they need help in whatever way we can.

Showing up for someone does not have to be a grand gesture. It can be small things, too: giving someone a genuine smile and a hello when you pass by them; being as quiet as possible in the morning so that your roommate can sleep; picking up a pen that a classmate has dropped. All of these things contribute to building a better community. We may not always notice when people do them, but we certainly notice when people don't do them.

To many, the idea of world peace seems completely impossible. But there are other elements which, in the years since the beginnings of the Bahá'í Faith, have become increasingly more accepted. The idea that every human is created equal and deserves respect and dignity, and that it is human-made institutions that create inequality, rather than any inherent biological or spiritual hierarchy, are values held by many people who have never even heard of the Bahá'í Faith. I don't believe these things only because Bahá'í writings say they are true. I believe them because I have experienced them as true and because those around me who do not believe in God also believe them to be true.

If you agree with the things that I have said about community, then I hope you welcome people with open arms as others have welcomed you. Let's build better communities so that we can more easily build a better world. Let's build peace from the bottom up.

@THO_EARLHAM

The Hidden Opponent is Taking the Spotlight

"There is no such thing as not enough." - Piper Brill

By Sofia Fedotova

Photo Credit: EC Hidden Opponent

"Our goal is to reduce the stigma around mental health not just in the sports scene on campus, but in all of Earlham's communities". – Piper Brill

The Hidden Opponent subdivision first appeared on our campus last semester, and is slowly but surely gaining our attention. It is a non-profit organization established in 2017 to remove the stigma surrounding mental health in athletics. I had an opportunity to interview Piper Brill, the president of The Hidden Opponent subdivision on our campus and a field hockey athlete, to learn more about it and shed some light on its goals for this year.

We started by going through the history of THO on our campus and how it was established. Piper recalled being a freshman during her first Involvement Fair and noticing a lack of mental health student organizations. At this point, she had been following the founder of The Hidden Opponent, Victoria Browne, for quite some time. That was the needed push. So, of course, the next step was establishing a THO subdivision here at Earlham.

Right now, the focus of our subdivision is advocacy. THO on our campus holds monthly meetings, and the first meeting was a gathering of 40 students (a good number of people if you ask me). Together, they battle the stigma around mental health, with the focus being on athletes. That leads to another way of showing up in our community – advocacy games. So far, the advocacy games have already taken place for women's soccer and field hockey — the volleyball team's is on November 2nd.

When asked about THO goals for this year, Piper said she hopes to get her feet on the ground and keep building while focusing on advocacy games. She also mentioned that even though the goal seems unattainable right now, she would love to have every game be an advocacy game.

We discussed spreading information about The Hidden Opponent among other students on campus. "They can simply show up to advocacy games," she said. When I asked for further details, it was established that extra brownie points can be achieved by wearing something green (in case of a severe lack of greenery in the wardrobe, THO members give out green ribbons during the games), but any level of participation is appreciated. "There is no such thing as not enough," added Piper at the end.

One of the last questions I asked was, "What would you like people to know about The Hidden Opponent?" Piper told me she was concerned about the misconception that the organization was only for athletes. She emphasized that mental health stigma affects everyone and that, even if a person was never involved in any sport, they should pay attention to The Hidden Opponent.

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Don't want to work on every issue?
We'd love your submissions:
Articles and Opinion Pieces
Comic Strips
Front and Back Cover Photos
Sodoku

Athlete on the Rise: Rhoi Phulusa

"Never stop believing in yourself, even when no one believes in you."

By Ethan Rose

On September 24, 2024, I attended the home match between Earlham Men's soccer and Wabash College. After a Quaker goal during the second half, the score became 4-1. The ball soon found #23's feet, Rhoi Phulusa, for a graceful dribble run past the Wabash defense to slot the ball in the net to make it 4-2. Not even 5 minutes later, a cross in the goalie's box found Phulusa once again, bringing the score to 4-3. I've been to many Earlham College athletic events in my time – I'm now in my junior year – but that moment when Phulusa scored and made it 4-3, narrowing the lead down to one goal when they were once 4-0 down, was one of the most exciting things I got to watch and experience at Earlham.

From that moment, I knew I had to learn and find out more from this starting striker, and how he's not just able to create moments like this, but to perform on a consistent basis.

Phulusa's biggest inspiration when it comes to soccer "would be my grandad," he stated. "He's the only reason why I started playing the sport." Phulusa's love for the sport grew and he saw it as an anchor to fulfill a huge dream, and, with that, he made a special promise: "When I was eight, I made a promise to my grandad and I said 'I will make you proud and I will be a professional soccer player.' I've been wanting to be a pro soccer player for a long time. I have so much passion for the game. People who know me know that soccer is my number one priority."

Growing up in Malawi, South Africa, Phulusa's love for the game was tested when a tournament win during his youth days brought him to a realization that the fight for victory seemed pointless. "I put in so much work and we weren't going to be known for anything, so there was nothing to look forward to. I thought I should stop playing the sport," he recalled. Yet, once again, his grandad gave him a reason to persist. "He told me the struggle is going to be painful, but what you get out of it is going to be sweeter than what you expected to get." He was a crucial figure in Phulusa's life who taught him the value of perseverance. This also plays a part in his mindset as he relates to the way other athletes handle their struggles. "Some people only see the bad in the sport if they do bad in a practice or a game; they don't appreciate the game or understand the work ethic it requires."

Phulusa was once a tense, furious player, an effect caused by his childhood teammates. "My teammates threw shade on me for not being a starter. They wouldn't let me hang around them because of that," touching on the negative impact teammates can have on anyone, in any sport. Moments like this allowed Phulusa to retain immense perspective going forward, and play a part in the type of teammate he is today. "When someone's ego is bigger than the person they are, they start to throw shade on other people. I won't yell at my teammates; I'll push them to do better the next play," he stated. "Not blaming others, that's what I believe in."

I asked Phulusa about his pre-game routine, a principal element in any athlete's process towards a strong performance, being the leading scorer for the Quakers. "2 hours before the game, I have my headphones in," he remarked. As a mental process Phulusa sets his mind on "what I'm going to do in

Continued from page 8

the game, but," Phulusa mentioned, "I'm always ready to change up my play style." We also touched on the importance of hard work within the sport to maintain your ability. "It's one thing to be talented; it's another to put in the work ethic," he expressed. "To convince the coach that you're the right guy for the position is something you have to put time and effort in. It never gets easier."

Apart from his ability to consistently work hard and perform, we spoke on a more delicate side of the sport, referencing enjoyment and the importance of gratitude in athletics. "My favorite thing about playing soccer is the support," Phulusa noted. "Yet you never know if the support will continue to be there, so I cherish those moments," referencing the loud crowd noise and celebrating with his teammates after he scores.

Phulusa recognizes how a sport can make one lose track of themselves or the journey it took them to reach a certain point. "Don't forget who you are. Don't forget who you are and where you're coming from the more you grow or the better you become at a sport."

Phulusa ended by advocating to "never stop believing in yourself, even when no one believes in you."

To close our talk, I asked Phulusa what advice he would give student-athletes to perform at a high level. "Just don't stop working," he affirmed. "You can be the most talented person, but if you don't put in the work ethic, there's nothing you're doing." Phulusa also noted to "enjoy the game. Don't forget to have fun, because there was a point when I forgot to." He lovingly added, "put on a smile as well." Emphasizing not just working hard in your sport, but always embracing the enjoyment it can bring.

Rhoi Phulusa embodies the rewards of hard work and determination, representing the journey one undertakes when pursuing a passion that doesn't just provide direction, but fulfillment in life.

Secret Spots: Teague Library

"The other library on campus"

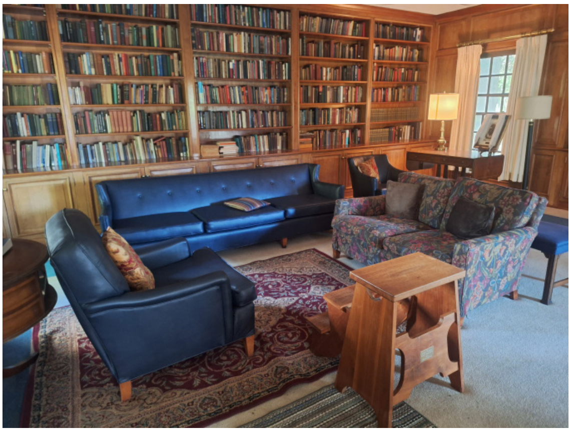
By Gus Fuller

There is an entire second library on campus. You can check out books there.

Teague Library sits just north of Virginia Cottage (which is just north of Public Safety). It is amazingly comfortable, very stuffy with the smell of book mold and poor climate control, and the internet would like to make you think that it does not exist. Despite being here for a few decades, there is no mention of this building on any website anywhere (it would seem that this article would be the first thing to put a Teague photo on the internet), and no other student who I have talked to knew of its existence. It is not clear who is wanting to keep it a secret, but it is a beautiful place. I almost want to be the one keeping the secret.

Teague is easily accessible by going to Virginia Cottage and asking for the key. After that, you can just walk in and have an incredibly cozy and secluded study space all to yourself. You have the key.

It is required that you ask before taking anything, and that you do not take any books that are not also available at Lilly Library.

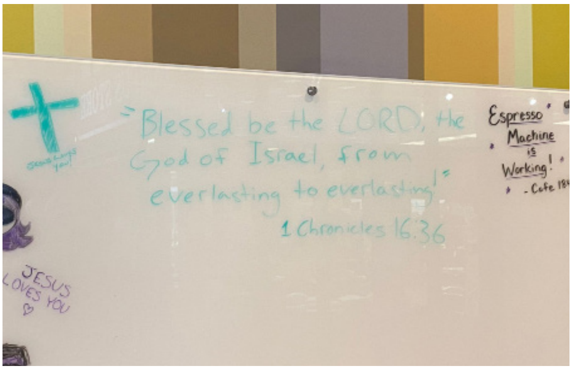


Picture of Teague Library.
Photo Credit: Gus Fuller

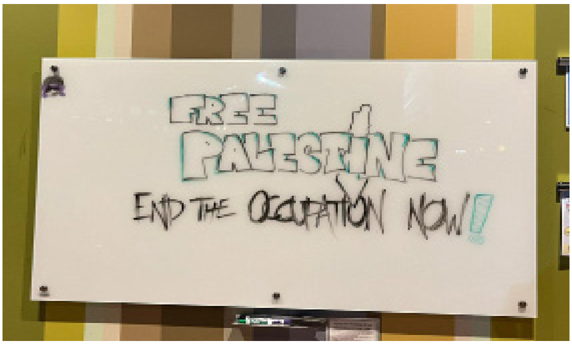
Opinion: Praise the Everlasting God of Israel? Amen, and Peace Be Upon Him.

"Misusing holy verses to validate the existence of a settler-colonial state and its genocidal crimes—funded by this country—is a waste of your sin."

By Yara Matar


"Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting!"
1 Chronicles 16:36
Espresso Machine is Working! - Cafe 18
JESUS LOVES YOU

Board Erased
Photo Credit: Yara Matar



Original Board
Photo Credit: Yara Matar

The other day, I texted a friend, a recent Earlham graduate, saying, "I miss the Earlham era when everyone was unapologetically opinionated and felt completely comfortable expressing themselves and their beliefs. What are we, after all, without principles—without standing for or against the social and political issues that define our time?" My friend agreed, and we reminisced about the good old days. Soon after, I got what I wished for — but not quite.

For various reasons, people — students, staff, and faculty alike — have become increasingly hesitant to share that part of themselves, along with the connections they're obliged to have with those suffering from global crises.

During my time at Earlham, people rarely expressed their opinions radically and boldly, and when they did, it was often anonymously. Two falls ago, for instance, flyers were printed and posted around campus, holding individuals accountable for what they stood for — or didn't stand for. That act was liberating, provocative, and unapologetic. The message was clear: "We want to make things right now." The purpose was to turn a truth everyone already knew into the elephant in the room that we could no longer avoid.

The Quaker response to that movement was, predictably, "let's talk about it," where people gathered in circles for discussions. The problem with this approach was that we didn't just invite people into the room — we invited their fears. As a result, the conversation was as productive as praying for snow in Indiana's July.

In the years since, many new students have arrived after dealing with years of isolation. This shift has changed the discourse; people's priorities now center on their peace of mind and personal safety above all else. Additionally, international students who are personally connected to these struggles often prefer not to be assigned the role of representatives or native informers to educate and enact change.

Another space for anonymous expression has been the board next to Café 1847. Recently, it was used to express solidarity with Palestine and the Palestinian people, marking a year since the genocide began against Palestinians in Gaza, across Palestine, and in neighboring countries — places where my immediate family and childhood friends live or, tragically, no longer live. This is something I usually don't disclose to validate my stance, but this is America, and I'm forced to engage with its consuming identity politics, so here goes nothing.

The statements on the board, which also expressed solidarity with other struggling nations like Sudan, Congo, and Yemen, were erased. Shortly after my conversation with my friend, the board's messages were replaced with a new statement, shown in the image. I smiled when I read it, for a couple of reasons. First, because I'm proud of anyone who firmly stands behind their beliefs — especially at Earlham and especially now. It's about time the white Quaker veneer of this place melts away, revealing its flaws and false promises of love, peace, and freedom.

The second reason I smiled is that this presents an excellent opportunity for a lesson in religion and history — one I don't feel obliged to teach but would like to.

The story of Bani Israel, the descendants of Israel, is mentioned in the Quran more than the people of any other nation, and similarly in the Bible. The name Israel was given to Prophet Ya'qub (Jacob) in recognition of his devotion to God. The people of Israel often referred to in these texts are his twelve sons and their descendants over centuries. Some of these populations are now Muslim, Jewish, and Christian. Many prophets came from them, such as Jesus and Moses — peace be upon them. These populations have never belonged exclusively to the modern-day settler-colonial state of apartheid, which was founded through the forced displacement and murder of thousands of Palestinians and Arabs during the 1948 Nakba. This same state has killed 40,000 Palestinians from Gaza alone in the past year.

The current population of the apartheid state is not equivalent to Bani Israel mentioned in the Bible and the Quran. It also includes people from outside the descendants of Israel who simply converted to Judaism and moved to the state. This does not mean being Jewish equates to being a colonial settler. In fact, many Jewish activists and movements have stood with their Palestinian brothers and sisters because of their shared past and current struggles.

When Bani Israel is mentioned in the holy books, God asks us to reflect on their journey with the prophets — to learn from their experiences what we, as humans, are required to do and avoid, regardless of our religion. Believing in the everlasting God of Israel is something Palestinians also believe. The mention of Israel in the Quran and the Bible does not justify the existence of an apartheid state, nor does it negate Palestine's right to be free, as was previously written on the board. I could name my future son Mohammad, but that would not make him a prophet. Misusing holy verses to validate the existence of a settler-colonial state and its genocidal crimes — funded by this country — is a waste of your sin.

What you need to understand, dear Earlhamite, is that you can and should express your opinion. But you should also be ready to be held accountable, no matter what or whom you stand for. Be prepared to be educated, fact-checked, and corrected — and that should be the worst consequence of your expression. This, in itself, is an opportunity: either to learn and accept what you once rejected, or to reinforce your principles more strongly than ever before.

So, does your belief begin and end at the whiteboard? Or was it simply an impulsive act of triggered hatred in response to pro-Palestinian organizing on campus, unmatched by any "public" opposition?

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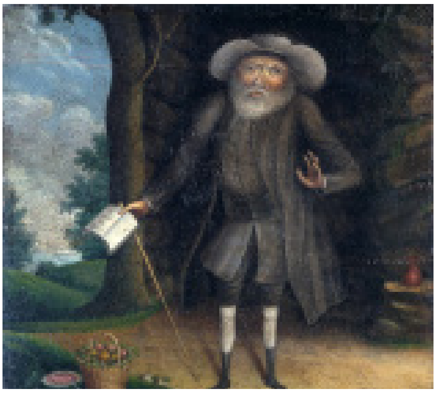
Articles and Opinion Pieces
Comic Strips
Front and Back Cover Photos
Sodoku

Opinion: Should Quakers Divest?

"What if divestment is "almost impossible?'"

By Gus Fuller



Benjamin Lay in his Benjamin Cave - William Williams

Yes. Quakers should divest from the anti-Palestinian war industry. I hope that wasn't under question. The witness in favor of this has been fairly clear so far. I believe the history of Quaker boycotting against slavery, etc. is fairly well-known, and so I put up here only a summary of "the" Quaker position on boycotting, this being that Quakers should "look upon [their] treasures…and try whether the seeds of war have nourishment in these [their] possessions" (Woolman).

But not that many people are actually against dealing with their wealth ethically. Institutionally, at least, Earlham's investment policy seeks to weed out investment in war. What would seem to be under question, however, is just how far to boycott/divest.

The largest obstacle against complete divestment, or even just further divestment, is that it is "almost impossible". The administration's argument is that it is "almost impossible" to survive as an educational institution of Earlham's scale without participating in the investment market, and it is impossible to invest at all without also investing against Palestine. Whether or not this claim is accurate is an entirely different article, but, if it is to be taken at face value, it is still not that good of an argument.

This is because Quaker boycotting has had its most meaning when pitted against the "almost impossible." From the very beginning, the refusal to pay tithes landed Quakers in dungeons; Benjamin Lay's refusal to support the slave economy forced him to live in a cave; Woolman's story may already be well known enough; sugarless teas; etc.. And yet it was not only the case that Quaker beliefs which often landed Quakers in jail or destitution were proof that those beliefs were impractical, but they were often valued precisely because of their impracticality.

This is because necessary to Quakerism is simplicity. By this, I don't refer to a kind of humility that's about avoiding increase or excess. Instead, simplicity is about becoming less so as to become more, and this to an excess. Or, to quote Peter Maurin, America's prophet of radical simplicity: it is about becoming "better off" by "[trying] to become better", and becoming "better" by no longer "trying to become better off." In the context of Quakerism, it is about breaking away from one's dependencies to what is necessary according to material calculations to instead become dependent on the leadings of the Light Within, becoming more impractical in one way so as to be more practical to another. (And I do not believe I need to pull up any precise quote to argue that Quakers believe that the Light Within leads them against such mass-violence as genocide.[1])

So boycotting has always been a kind of Quaker asceticism, one which not only confirms but develops what it means to be Quaker.

When one reorients oneself in this way, the argument that this article has been dealing with fades away. Whether or not it is "almost impossible" to stay better off — or afloat — as an institution entirely divested from anti-Palestinian markets becomes irrelevant. What becomes relevant, however, is that it is "almost impossible" to remain Quaker without divesting.

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[1] But I do put here the almost doctrinal formulation by George Fox that: "the spirit of Christ…[which] is not changeable…will never lead [Quakers] to fight and war…with outward weapons".

Senior Spotlight: Johnny Costello

By David Mathew

Photo Credit: Jonny Costello

What's your major?
I'm an ENSU major on the Culture and Justice track!

Favorite memories?
I'll always remember canoeing down the Wanganui River in New Zealand. I also made a really special memory [on a trip to Red River Gorge]; I saw the northern lights for the first time ever while leading my climbing class.

Favorite place on campus?
The living room of Virginia Cottage.

One thing you'll miss about Earlham when you graduate?
I will really miss all the Outdoor Ed. trips and opportunities (oh, and the people)!

Any advice for other students?
Do what makes you happy. Try not to worry too much about pleasing others — your happiness will please others.

A favorite quote?
"And love dares you to change our way of caring about ourselves / this is our last dance / this is ourselves / under pressure" - David Bowie, "Under Pressure"

Study Abroad Spotlight: Grace Russell

By Evelyn Bergus

Photo Credit: Grace Russell

Tell me a little about yourself!
My name is Grace Russell, I'm a third year Japanese Studies major with a focus in language and linguistics. I'll be graduating in 2026.

Where are you studying?
I'm currently doing a full academic year at Waseda University in Tokyo, Japan and living with a host family in Yokohama.

What has been the best thing you've eaten so far?
The best thing I've eaten is definitely abura soba near campus.

What are you looking forward to?
"I'm looking forward to making new friens, joining clubs, and improving my Japanese.

Anything you'd like people back on campus to know?
Japan Study is a great program, and it should not be slept on. The Japanese Studies department is full of great people who work really hard to make these experiences worthwhile. Being in a new country this long can be scary, but there are so many wonderful opportunities that come with it.

Faculty Spotlight: Yunting Yin

By Si Guntzel

Photo Credit: Yunting Yin

Profile?

I am Yunting, a new Assistant Professor of Computer Science who joined Earlham this July. This semester, I am teaching Programming & Problem Solving and Computer Game Design. I was born and raised in Shanghai, China, and came to the US to pursue my bachelor's degree.

Background?

I started learning computer science in college, and I was inspired to go to graduate school and pursue a PhD by the professor who taught me operating systems and networks... In graduate school, I did research on speech processing and natural language processing under the guidance of Dr. Steven Skiena. My academic journey has been shaped by these great mentors, and I aim to provide that same level of support and guidance for my students.

One game that inspires you?

Overwatch... for its diversity of characters and interesting narratives… it is an example of how well-designed story elements and mechanics can engage players.

Admin Interview: Scot Schaeffer

"We need to promote Earlham"

By David Mathew

Scot Schaeffer
(courtesy of Earlham College)

This year marks Scot Schaeffer's second year as Vice President for Enrollment Management at Earlham. As VP of Enrollment, Scot oversees admissions and Earlham's growth as a school. Recently, I got a chance to sit down with him and discuss where Earlham is right now and where it is going to be in the future.

Admissions at Earlham in the recent past have been grim: with the COVID pandemic in 2020, enrollment numbers tanked. However, since then, numbers have been on the rise. Since 2021, Earlham has had a marked increase in its enrollment numbers, with 223 new students compared to 2021's 181. So how did this happen?

Scot attributes it to the things his department has been doing — admissions has recently been pursuing an enrollment growth plan centered around local market growth, which pushes admissions within a 150-mile radius centered on Earlham, including urban population centers such as Indianapolis, Cincinnati, Louisville, and Columbus. Scot also pushes growth in markets outside our local area too, but tries to push us nearby more intensely.

He says Earlham promoting visits to the school is a major proponent for greater enrollment numbers. A big part of this is the EPIC program. While it is not alone in the country, Earlham's EPIC program is still a major draw for many students, and Earlham recognizes this, providing every visiting student information regarding it and often even a hands-on experience with the program.

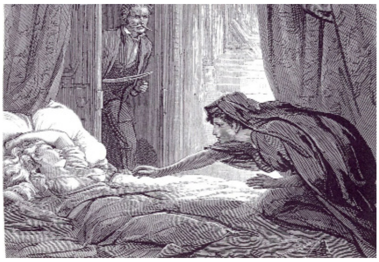
Alongside promoting EPIC, Scot says that Earlhamites are a large part of the visiting experience. While not everyone on campus is Quaker, Earlham's Quaker heritage and ideals help develop the campus' atmosphere. Every day, faculty receive an email with information about visiting students and are encouraged to greet visitors should they see them. Scot believes that we need to promote Earlham not just as a school, but as a brand. He says that Earlham, if it wants to grow enrollment, should put who we are before anything else. "Everybody's a recruiter," he says.

A new strategy Earlham might be implementing soon to boost admissions is the use of AI. He mentioned that AI might be used to personalize campus visits, taking student and family information and developing a plan for the visitors to follow. Scot told me that while he does feel some anxiety about using such a burgeoning technology and that he feels some worry about it being used irresponsibly, he sees it not as a replacement but as a way to make admissions better. It doesn't take away the humanity in admissions, he thinks, but frees up time for the department to make what they do better.

In the future, Scot sees admissions at Earlham growing. The department certainly is. 2024 is the first year Scot knows of where the department is composed entirely of returning faces. While he thinks that admissions will become much more competitive, especially with Earlham's budget, he thinks that we will keep growing as long as we develop Earlham as not just a place, but a people.

Book Review: *Carmilla*

By Isabelle Fisher



"Carmilla" Illustration from The Dark Blue by D. H. Friston, 1872

In honor of October being upon us, I figure it is time to bring back my Word book reviews with Sheridan Le Fanu's most famous work, *Carmilla*. The precursor and inspiration to Bram Stoker's iconic *Dracula*, *Carmilla* encompasses all the goodies of vampire fiction, and it has an even better aspect: it is so homoerotic. Specifically, homoerotic between the female protagonist and narrator, Laura, and Carmilla, a vampire she encountered in her adolescence.

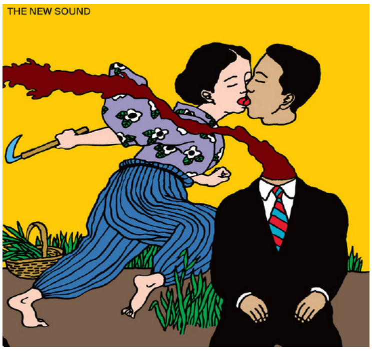
Despite its literary reverence, Carmilla did not quite reach the same fame and cultural influence as Dracula, partially due to the fact it is told from a woman's perspective and because it is much more explicit in its homoeroticism than Dracula is. However, Carmilla's writing does tend to not reach the same heights that Bram Stoker does in *Dracula*; it is quite on the nose. Especially in the first chapters, Laura primarily tells the reader her feelings about her life rather than allowing the reader to figure that out in the raw description of her life. This telling could also be because Laura is recounting an experience to the reader, and, as with any telling, she wants to give the reader context for her life prior to this supernatural event. Even so, *Dracula* is made up entirely of first-hand accounts and experiences and does not have this same telling quality.

I gave *Carmilla* 4 out of 5 stars and would easily read it again to set the mood for October. I recommend this book if you're a lesbian, a vampire lover, or even both.

Album Review: *The New Sound* by Geordie Greep

"An eclectic and fascinating creative explosion"

By Si Guntzel



The New Sound album cover

Around two years ago now, a friend of mine turned me on to *Hellfire* by black midi. I was smitten. Their blend of avant-garde, rock, jazz, and the musical theater-like flair of frontman Geordie Greep's vocals made their sound remarkably distinct. After the band's breakup earlier this year, the question arose: can Greep fill the void left by the other members in his debut solo album? Now that it's out, I think the answer is: mostly!

The New Sound is aptly named. It makes Greep's vital role in black midi clear while incorporating entirely new influences that set the album apart from his previous work. black midi's rock and avant-garde roots are present, but individual tracks range from high-flying, joyful instrumental jazz ("The New Sound") to an entirely different style of early-20th-century romantic jazz ("If You Are But a Dream") to music that truly wouldn't sound out of place on a Broadway stage ("The Magician"), all tied together by Greep's signature lyrical style. The lyrics' weirdness is matched only by their depth: the album explores the bizarre, uncomfortable, and artificial romantic relationships of several (or perhaps only one?) strange male characters in a theatrical and eccentric fashion.

In terms of sheer number of standout tracks, *The New Sound* doesn't quite match black midi's best. However, Greep's excitement about his freedom from black midi's restrictions is obvious: experienced front-to-back without any interruptions, the album is an eclectic and captivating creative explosion that's more than the sum of its parts.

Cheers and Sneers

Compiled by Max Fox

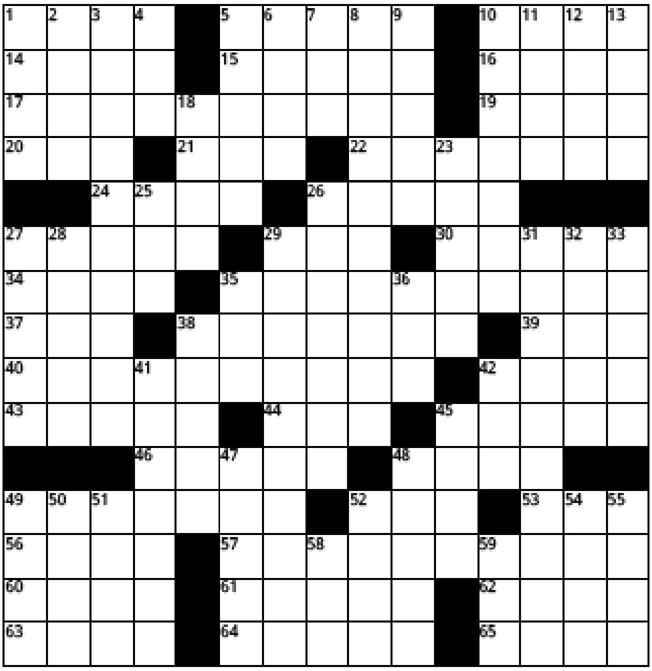
Cheers to...

- A 360° head swivel before talking trash in the cafe
- Summer to fall transitional outfits
- Getting midterm grades in a timely manner
- Falling in love in October
- Playing 2048 Cupcakes during lectures
- Stepping on crunchy leaves
- Our buddies at PubSafe

Sneers to...

- Classes that are weeks behind the syllabus
- The broken espresso machine in the cafe
- Losing your ID card
- Talia graduating
- A constant state of political dread
- The lentil loaf at SAGA
- Autumn situationships

Issue 16 - I Hardly Know Her!



ACROSS

1 Geometry, Statistics, Algebra, etc.
5 Take _ ____ (get a wash)
10 Clutter
14 Where you might do 5 across
15 Coffee and chocolate
16 Old Russian ruler
17 "She set a fire in me --- like magic!"
19 ___ _ good example
20 Bag, often in brand names
21 Take advantage of
22 Writes anew
24 Grub
26 Subatomic particle
27 Bonnie's partner in crime
29 Phillipa of "Hamilton"
30 Workout regimen, especially in the 90s
34 Door fastener
35 Efforts to promote reading
37 Shiba ___, a dog breed
38 Tending to tickle
39 Hospital areas
40 "She watched the kids for the night and I couldn't stop thinking about her!"
42 Opposed to
43 Evaluate
44 Guys
45 Make _ ____ for (justify)
46 Big name in grills
48 Pub orders
49 "She was beautiful --- picturesque!"
52 Harden, like plaster
53 Manages the money for a corporation
56 German adjective for an old woman
57 Mohair source
60 Nurture
61 Back in style
62 Firenze's river
63 "Do the Right Thing" pizzeria
64 Darnst
65 University offerings, for short

DOWN

1 Offered by Google and Apple
2 "Right back __ __!"
3 Heroes that aren't chicken?
4 "Game of Thrones" channel
5 Stockpile
6 Holds in marrow
7 Accuracy, for short
8 Series about fledgling police officers
9 Rabbit relatives
10 Peak in Exodus
11 Dudes, in Spanish slang
12 Fill up
13 Ladies of Sp.
18 Can't talk about it?
23 "your" French
25 Payroll service company
26 "When she split, I thought I'd go off like a rocket!"
27 Japanese city on Tokyo Bay
28 Turner, Cantrell, and Del Ray
29 "She was a Mississipi girl..."
31 Get revenge
32 Some Sesame Street Muppets
33 Actor Davis, 1917-2005
35 A widely-criticized measure of body fat
36 TiVo, for one
38 So far
41 They're boring or sleepy
42 Pilot that's shot down five or more enemies
45 Utah ski resort
47 Five o' clock shadow, for one
48 Former Houston hockey team
49 What you hit in golf?
50 Epithet of Athena
51 Slanted type: Abbr.
52 Kind or type
54 Vampire tooth
55 Plains people
58 Video game series with settings in Liberty City and San Andreas
59 Josh, of Frozen fame

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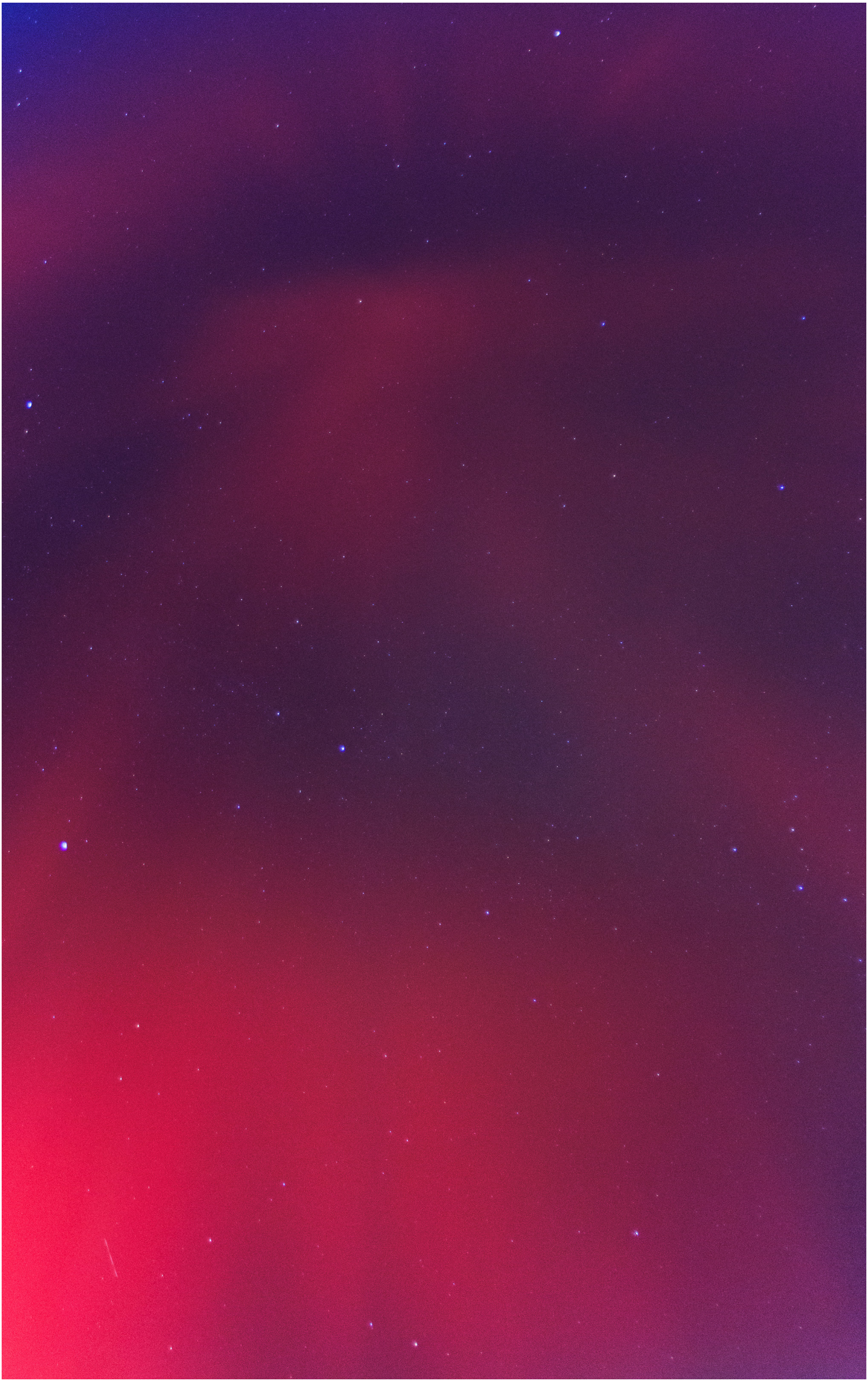Follow our Instagram for updates and issue releases!